

## A few notes on rearing *Loweia (Chrysophanus) alciphron* var. *gordius*.

By R. M. PRIDEAUX.

A female of this insect was captured in the Rhone Valley, near Martigny, on June 23rd, 1905, which was persuaded to lay a few eggs on the stems and leaves of common sorrel. (A photo-micrograph of some of these ova, taken by Mr. Tonge, has already appeared in Mr. Tutt's *Natural History of British Butterflies*, and was reproduced in this magazine, December, 1905.) The ova began to hatch on July 12th, thus disproving, in this instance, at least, the statement that the species hibernates as an egg.

The young larvæ closely resemble those of *Rumicia phlaeas* in appearance and habits, being very sluggish then and during their entire larval life. At this stage they are closely covered with long, relatively stout, hairs, pointing slightly backwards; they make inroads into the green substance of the leaves of *Rumex acetosa*, leaving the upper epidermis intact. The larvæ moulted three times before hibernation, after the first moult obtaining, more or less, the characteristic "wood-louse" shape; they are entirely green throughout their larval stages, covered with short, pale, pinkish-brown bristles; none of my specimens showed any limit of the pinkish linear lines seen in *R. phlaeas*. Early in November, with considerable unanimity, the entire thirteen larvæ that I then possessed, ceased feeding, and attached themselves rather loosely to the sorrel leaves, where they were all found, somewhat shrunken in size, in the following March, when they were transferred to fresh sorrel leaves, on which, when the weather was warm, they very leisurely began again to feed.

The black larval head is scarcely ever visible, even during feeding, the segments behind it enclosing and enfolding it. Except during the moulting process, the least touch is sufficient to dislodge the larva from its foodplant; should it fall upon its back, the leisurely manner in which it twists itself back on its feet characterises its sluggish habits and attitudes under all conditions.

The larvæ either retired under dead leaves for pupation, or spun up under the lid of their cage. There is a fairly substantial thoracic girdle, the cremastral attachment being but slight. The pupa is dumpy in shape, and pale olive-brown in colour, mottled with darker shades. As in the case of the other *Chrysophanid* pupæ, the dorsal and abdominal areas are covered with stalked, glassy, parachute-shaped prominences. Of the thirteen larvæ, one was lost by a misadventure; eleven of the remainder began pupating on May 25th, 1906, the first butterfly being disclosed on June 23rd, in all, four males and seven females (in the order given) resulting.

The specimens are of average size, the males resemble those captured in the same locality as the parent female last year, of a light type, the purple flush being rather in the nature of a pale mauve, general, suffusion.

The thirteenth larva, oddly enough, ceased feeding after the last moult, shrank somewhat in size, and attached itself to the side of its cage, and remained, aestivating, in this situation for about three months. Early in September it again showed signs of activity, and is now (September 11th) apparently feeding up with a view to pupation.